

Appln. No. 10/551,263  
Amd. dated March 8, 2011  
Reply to Office Action of December 8, 2010

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-5 (**Cancelled**)

6. (**Previously Presented**) A modified Staphylococcal enterotoxin B (SEB) having a reduced reactivity with a neutralizing antibody to SEB (anti-SEB antibody), wherein the amino acid sequence from residue position 226 to residue position 229 in the amino acid sequence of SEB as shown in SEQ ID NO:1 is Ala Thr Thr Gln.

7. (**Previously Presented**) A modified Staphylococcal enterotoxin B (SEB) having a reduced reactivity with a neutralizing antibody to SEB (anti-SEB antibody), wherein the amino acid sequence from residue position 226 to residue position 229 in the amino acid sequence of SEB as shown in SEQ ID NO:1 is Lys Arg Ile Ile.

8. (**Previously Presented**) A modified Staphylococcal enterotoxin B (SEB) having a reduced reactivity with a neutralizing antibody to SEB (anti-SEB antibody), wherein Asn at

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residue position 23 in the amino acid sequence of SEB as shown in SEQ ID NO: 1 is substituted with Tyr.

Claims 9-15. (**Cancelled**)

16. (**Previously Presented**) The modified SEB of claim 6, wherein Asn at residue position 23 in the amino acid sequence of SEB as shown in SEQ ID NO: 1 is substituted with Tyr.

17. (**Previously Presented**) The modified SEB of claim 7, wherein Asn at residue position 23 in the amino acid sequence of SEB as shown in SEQ ID NO: 1 is substituted with Tyr.

Claims 18-20 (**Cancelled**).

21. (**Currently Amended**) A modified Staphylococcal enterotoxin B (SEB), having a reduced reactivity with a neutralizing antibody to SEB (anti-SEB antibody), and capable of being expressed in a soluble form in *Escherichia coli* so as to be maintained stably in an aqueous solution and which modified SEB retains a therapeutic effect to rheumatoid arthritis immunopathy ~~equivalent to that of naturally occurring SEB,~~

wherein the reactivity with anti-SEB antibody is reduced as a result of amino acid substitution at residue positions 226 to 229 of SEQ ID NO: 1, with the amino acid sequence at residue

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positions 226 to 229 of SEQ ID NO:1 being substituted with Ala Thr Thr Gln, respectively, or substituted with Lys Arg Ile Ile, respectively, and

wherein Asn at residue position 23 of SEQ ID NO:1 is substituted with Tyr.

Claim 22 (**Cancelled**)

23. (**Withdrawn**) In a method for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis comprising administration to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of a treatment agent, the improvement wherein

the treatment agent comprises the modified SEB of claim 21.